MARVEL® ANNUAL

© 1984 MARVEL COMICS GROUP

TM

$1.00
18
1984
02921

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN® ANNUAL

FRENZ/GUICE

THE SCORPION TAKES A BRIDE!

BUT IT'S J. JONAH JAMESON'S!

SCRIPTED BY STAN (THE MAN) LEE!

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

THE SCORPION TAKES A BRIDE!

(BUT NOT THE WAY YOU THINK!)

SPIDER-MAN™

I STILL REMEMBER THE START OF IT. I HEARD THE GUN-SHOTS AS SOME BANK ROBBERS TRIED TO ESCAPE BY HELICOPTER. I KNEW IT MEANT I'D MISS THE A-TEAM TONIGHT. BUT THAT'S THE BREAKS WHEN YOUR NAME IS--SPIDER-MAN!

WELL, WADDAYA KNOW! THEY ROBBED THE FIRST NATIONAL AND THEY'RE TAKING OFF IN A HIGH-TECH WHIRLYBIRD.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE GOOD OL' DAYS WHEN I ONLY HADDA CHASE AFTER SOUPED-UP SEDANS?

THEY WERE TOO FAR FOR MY WEBBING TO REACH. ANY SANER SUPER HERO WOULD HAVE QUIETLY WALTZED AWAY FROM THIS LITTLE TABLEAU.

BUT I'VE NEVER BEEN ACCUSED OF TERMINAL SANITY.

PLOT BY: TOM DeFALCO
BREAKDOWNS BY: RON FRENZ
FINISHES BY: BOB LAYTON and JACKSON GUICE
COLORS BY: BOB SHAREN
LETTERS BY: JOE ROSEN
EDITED BY: DANNY FINGEROTH
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: JIM SHOOTER
SCRIPTED (FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 12 YEARS) BY STAN LEE (THAT'S RIGHT--*STAN LEE!*)

IF MY WEBBING COULDN'T REACH 'EM FROM THERE...

THERE WAS ONLY ONE THING TO DO...

GET CLOSER.

LIKE SO.

BINGO! THESE LITTLE "THWIPPS" ARE MUSIC TO MY SHELL-LIKE EARS.

THWIPP!

THWIPP!

THAPPP!

I WAS SO TAKEN WITH THE RAPTURE OF THE MOMENT, THAT I ALMOST FORGOT IT WASN'T A TEA PARTY. UNTIL --

THE WEB-SWINGER! WE'LL MAKE MINCEMEAT OUTTA HIM!

FROM HERE ON, IT'S BY THE NUMBERS. I'LL JUST CLIMB TO THE COCKPIT...

YEAH. SO I THOUGHT.

BUT MY BANK-BUSTIN' BUDDIES HAD OTHER IDEAS.

THEY SAW ME. THEY'RE TRYING TO SHAKE ME OFF.

WHOA, GUYS! YOU'RE ZINGIN' TOO LOW!

IF THE PILOT WASN'T A CERTIFIED LUNATIC HE WAS PUTTING ON A GREAT ACT.

THIS WASN'T A MOVIE. IT WAS REAL LIFE.

BUT IT WAS LOOKING MORE LIKE REAL DEATH!

UP! GET UP! YOU'RE GONNA CRASH!

NEWSSTAND

I NEVER REALIZED I WAS SO PERSUASIVE. SECONDS LATER...

HE'S GAINING ALTITUDE!

YEP, HE WAS HEADING UP AGAIN, BUT I HAD NO REASON TO CHEER.

NOW I SEE WHAT HE'S AFTER.

HE'S TRYING TO BRUSH ME OFF, BY SLAMMING ME INTO--

≠UNHHH≠ THAT WAS TOO CLOSE!

OH NO! HE'S HEADING DOWN AGAIN!

SUDDENLY, THEY LEARNED THE HARD WAY: DUMB LUCK CAN'T LAST FOREVER.

BANK 'ER, YOU FOOL!

TOO LATE! WE HIT THE TOWER! THE ROTOR'S SNAPPED!

WE'RE FALLING!

CAN'T LET THE SHIP HIT THE STREET!

BUT HOW DO I STOP IT?

THAT'S WHEN I GOT A WILD IDEA...

I CRISS-CROSSED MY WEBBING AS I SWUNG DOWN...

THEN I LANDED ON A TRUCK BELOW.

I WATCHED THE SHIP DROPPING TOWARDS ME, CLOSER AND CLOSER...

EACH WEB-STRAND SLOWED IT DOWN A LITTLE MORE.

BUT NOT ENOUGH TO STOP ITS PLUNGE.

IT'S ALMOST ON TOP OF ME!

I COULD HEAR THE SCREAMING ABOVE ME, COULD SEE EVERY RIVET IN THE UNDERCARRIAGE.

FROM BUILDING TO BUILDING AND BACK AGAIN.

...SNAPPING THE WEBBING AS IT FELL.

AND THEN...

IT REACHED ME! AND I CAUGHT IT!

KNOW SOMETHING? IF WEB-STRANDS WERE WALRUSES, I'D HAVE FED 'EM SOME FISH RIGHT THEN AND THERE!

CATZONE'S

WELL, THAT WRAPPED IT FOR ME.

SURE HOPE I CATCH THIS ON THE LATE-NITE NEWS.

NOW IT WAS TIME FOR THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF ALL.

MINOLTA

MD 50mm 1:14 JAPAN

THESE PIX'LL BE WORTH A BUNDLE--

--IF I REMEMBERED TO LOAD THE CAMERA.

I REMEMBERED! THINGS DON'T ALWAYS GO WRONG--IT SAYS HERE.

MY NEXT STOP WAS THAT BEST-SELLING BASTION OF TRUTH AND INTEGRITY, THE DAILY BUGLE.

DAILY BUGLE

THE PLACE SEEMED A LITTLE DIFFERENT TO ME TODAY.

EVERYONE WAS CLUSTERED AROUND IN GROUPS, WHISPERING AND GRINNING...

LIKE SOMEONE'S FLY WAS OPEN.

HOPE IT'S NOT MINE.

GUESS WHAT, PETER? NED JUST RETURNED FROM HIS EXTENDED ASSIGNMENT.

HEY, THAT'S GREAT, BETTY.

BUT THAT CAN'T BE WHAT ALL THE WHISPERING'S ABOUT.

WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE?

NOTHING EARTH-SHAKING. IT JUST HAS TO DO WITH MR. JAMESON.

IT WAS LIKE PRYING GOSSIP FROM THE SPHINX. BUT BEFORE I COULD ASK ANY MORE QUESTIONS...

HI, PETER. THIS A SOCIAL CALL, OR DO YOU HAVE THE ANSWER TO AN EDITOR'S PRAYER IN THAT ENVELOPE YOU'RE CLUTCHING?

YOU'RE A MIND-READER, MR. R. WAIT'LL YOU SEE...

IT'S REALLY NOTHING MUCH. JUST AN EXCLUSIVE SHOT OF SPIDER-MAN CATCHING A FALLING HELICOPTER IN HIS BARE HANDS IN THE MIDDLE OF A CROWDED STREET.

BUT I KNOW YOU'RE BORED WITH PIX OF SPIDEY...

TELL YOU WHAT, SON -- I'LL OVERLOOK MY BOREDOM JUST THIS ONCE. YOUR SHOT'S A SENSATION. GOT PAGE-ONE WRITTEN ALL OVER IT.

LET'S REMEMBER THAT WHEN YOU WRITE OUT MY CHECK, HUH?

I'D BE LYING IF I SAID I WASN'T PLEASED WITH MYSELF. AND YOU KNOW MAY PARKER'S NEPHEW NEVER EVER LIES.

PETER, YOU'RE JUST TOO MUCH.

IT SURE BEATS NOT ENOUGH.

WHILE I WAS BEAMING, A PRINTER'S MESSENGER ARRIVED.

I GOT SOME STUFF HERE FOR J. JONAH JAMESON.

STUFF, HUH? YOUR POWERS OF DESCRIPTION ÷KAFF÷ ARE ALMOST AWESOME.

EVERYONE'S A COCKAMAMIE COMEDIAN AROUND HERE.

HIS PRINTING SAMPLE'S FALLING OFF THE BOX. I'LL JUST-- HEY! WHAT'S THIS?

GATHER 'ROUND, LADS AND LASSIES. ÷KAFF-KAFF÷ OL' BEN URICH'S GOT AN ITEM FOR YE NEWS-HUNGRY MASSES.

NOBODY'S SCOOPIN' THE BUGLE ON *THIS* ONE!

BY NOW, MY CURIOSITY WAS BIG ENOUGH TO CHOKE GODZILLA. I HEADED FOR WENDY THORNTON...

WHAT'S HAPPENING, WENDY? SOMEONE CATCH JAMESON WITH A SMILE ON HIS FACE?

COULD BE. ESPECIALLY IF THIS ANNOUNCEMENT IS TRUE. HERE, BE MY GUEST.

LOOKS LIKE A WEDDING INVITATION.

IT WAS.

HOW ABOUT THAT! THE OL' CURMUDGEON IS FINALLY TAKING THE PLUNGE.

MARLA MADISON and J. JONAH JAMESON REQUEST THE HONOR OF YOUR PRESENCE AT THE

JOLLY JONAH AND MARLA MADISON WERE GETTING MARRIED!

SO SHE'S FINALLY GONNA MAKE A RESPECTABLE MAN OUT OF HIM!

SHOULD WE OFFER CONGRATULATIONS OR CONDOLENCES?

MY, YOU'RE CERTAINLY QUICK WITH THE QUIPS TODAY, MR. PARKER.

WHOA, ANN. I WAS READING THAT.

I KNOW. YOU WERE MOVING YOUR LIPS.

I'M WRITING AN ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE LATE EDITION'S SOCIETY PAGE AND I'LL NEED THE INVITATION FOR REFERENCE.

WE MUSTN'T SQUASH THE NEWS, MUST WE?

SOMEDAY I'LL TELL HER WHAT I'D LIKE TO SQUASH.

MEANWHILE, IN JONAH'S 46TH FLOOR EXECUTIVE SUITE, THE TWO LOVEBIRDS WERE SAFELY ENSCONCED AWAY FROM THE PEASANTS.

JONAH DEAR, ARE YOU AS HAPPY AS I?

I DON'T KNOW, MARLA. HOW HAPPY ARE YOU?

THAT'S WHAT I LOVE ABOUT YOU, YOUR KNACK FOR ROMANTIC SMALL TALK.

÷HRRRUMPH÷ I'M A PUBLISHER, MY DEAR, NOT A LONG-HAIRED SCREEN STAR.

THAT'S THE OTHER THING I LOVE ABOUT YOU. NOBODY ELSE CAN GARGLE A "HRRRUMPH" LIKE YOU CAN.

TAKES YEARS OF PRACTICE, MY SWEET.

HAVE YOU INVITED JOHN TO THE WEDDING YET?

I, EH, I'M NOT SURE HE CAN MAKE IT. YOU SEE...

NONSENSE. YOU MIGHT AS WELL NOT INVITE THE MINISTER.

HE'S YOUR OWN SON. HE MUST BE THERE.

AND, FOR THE UMPTEENTH TIME, GET RID OF THAT CIGAR.

BUT I WASN'T INHALING.

THAT'S NOT THE REASON, JONAH.

THIS IS.

IF YOU'RE WONDERING HOW I KNOW WHAT THEY WERE SAYING WHEN I WASN'T THERE, HANG LOOSE, HERO. 'TWILL ALL BE REVEALED.

I'D BETTER SCAMPER, DEAR, I DON'T LIKE TO KEEP YOU FROM YOUR WORK.

YOU KIDDING? WHY DO YOU THINK I'M MARRYING YOU?

MAN DOES NOT LIVE BY TOIL ALONE.

I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE A CORNBALL, JJ. NOW I KNOW IT.

WHA--?!!

SOME JOURNALIST! THERE'S NO SUCH WORD AS "WHA."

YOU!

I ALWAYS DID ENVY YOUR INSPIRED REPARTEE.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE?

I'M NOT THERE. I'M HERE.

I CAME TO CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR WEDDING PLANS.

NEXT TIME SEND A NOTE.

SINCE YOU MAY NOT INVITE ME, AND I CAN'T KISS THE BRIDE, I FIGURED I'D DO THE NEXT BEST THING.

÷GURRK÷

YOU MISBEGOTTEN, COSTUMED CRETIN! NOW I'LL NEED A RABIES SHOT!

THE BOUQUET'S FOR THE LITTLE LADY. DON'T SNEAK OFF AND SELL IT.

8

I MIGHT HAVE STAYED LONGER, BUT I HATE TO SEE A GROWN MAN CRY.

MR. JAMESON, ARE YOU THERE?

WHERE IN THE BLOODY BLUE BLAZES DIDJA THINK I'D BE?

WOW! IF HE'S THIS BAD-TEMPERED *BEFORE* THE WEDDING, I SURE PITY THE BRIDE.

JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU YOUR LIMO IS WAITING.

THERE HE GOES, OL' MR. SWEETNESS 'N JOY HIMSELF.

I WAS TEMPTED TO FOLLOW JJ'S CAR AND RIB HIM SOME MORE, BUT I THOUGHT BETTER OF IT.

LET 'IM GO. HE'S GOT ENOUGH PROBLEMS, JUST LIVING WITH HIMSELF.

IMAGINE WAKING UP IN THE MORNING AND BEING J. JONAH JAMESON. YECCCH!

AW, WHAT THE HECK, I GUESS HE'S NOT ALL THAT BAD. HE COULDN'T BE.

WHAT WOULD I DO WITH MYSELF IF I DIDN'T HAVE JJ TO KICK AROUND, ANYWAY?

SOMETIMES, WEB-SWINGING CAN GO TO YOUR HEAD. I ACTUALLY BEGAN TO FEEL MELLOW ABOUT THAT MOUSTACHED MISFIT.

IT'S NOT AS THOUGH HE'S EVIL, OR SINISTER.

HE COULDN'T HELP BEING BORN A POMPOUS STUFFED SHIRT.

AND HE'S ALWAYS GOOD FOR SOME LAUGHS.

NUTS! WHY DON'T I LEVEL WITH MYSELF?

THE WORST THING ABOUT HIM IS-- HE DOESN'T LIKE ME.

BUT HE'S BEEN PART OF MY LIFE'S CAST OF CHARACTERS FOR SO LONG, HE'S GROWN ON ME.

JUST LIKE A WART--OR LIKE MY BLACK SUIT WANTED TO DO BEFORE I DUMPED IT!*

*SEE AMAZING SPIDER MAN #258 --DANNY.

WHILE I WAS ROOF-HOPPING AROUND THE BIG APPLE, JONAH WAS HEADING FOR A SANITARIUM IN THE SUBURBS.

HERE YOU ARE, SIR. THE SHERWOOD NURSING HOME.

GOOD TO SEE YOU, MR. JAMESON. YOU'RE LOOKING FIT.

WHAT ABOUT MY SON, DOCTOR? HOW IS HE? IS THERE ANY IMPROVEMENT?

HE HAS HIS GOOD DAYS, AND HIS BAD DAYS.

HE'S BEST, OF COURSE, WHEN HE'S CALM, RELAXED, AND UNTROUBLED.

HE SEEMS TO FIND PEACE OF MIND DOING JIGSAW PUZZLES.

I SEE HE'S DOING ONE NOW.

IT'S SO HARD -- TO SEE HIM LIKE THIS.

IT -- IT JUST BREAKS MY HEART.

IT SHOULDN'T, MR. JAMESON. HE'S RELATIVELY CONTENT, WELL-CARED FOR, AND THERE'S ALWAYS THE CHANCE OF A COMPLETE RECOVERY.

I KNOW. BUT WHEN I THINK OF HIM THE WAY HE WAS, SO BRIGHT, SO COMPETENT, SO -- YES, SO HEROIC.

LET'S GO IN. HE'S WAITING FOR YOU.

DAD! WHAT A PLEASURE TO SEE YOU.

HELLO, SON.

I'LL LEAVE YOU TWO ALONE NOW.

HOW'S IT GOING, JOHN? ARE THEY TAKING GOOD CARE OF YOU?

SURE, DAD, I CAN'T COMPLAIN.

I'VE GOT LOTS OF PUZZLES.

WHEN DID YOU START ON THIS JIGSAW KICK?

I DON'T KNOW. DIDN'T SEEM TO BE MUCH ELSE TO DO. Y'KNOW, DAD, IT'S A FUNNY THING.

THEY REMIND ME OF MY LIFE. SO MANY PIECES THAT DON'T FIT TOGETHER.

I UNDER-STAND.

I-- CAME TO TELL YOU SOMETHING, JOHN.

WHAT IS IT, DAD? YOU LOOK SO GRIM.

OH NO, NO. IT'S NOTHING BAD.

IT'S GOOD NEWS. GREAT NEWS. I'M GETTING MARRIED-- TO MARLA MADISON.

JOHN, WAIT. WHAT'S THE MATTER?

YOU KNOW WHAT'S THE MATTER.

SHE'LL COME BETWEEN US! I KNOW SHE WILL!

JUST LIKE SOMETHING ALWAYS COMES BETWEEN US!

YOU-- RUINED YOUR PUZZLE.

I TOLD YOU, IT REMINDS ME OF MY LIFE.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, JOHN.

THEN DON'T SAY ANYTHING. I DON'T TALK MUCH ANYMORE.

I'M SORRY IT DIDN'T GO TOO WELL THIS TIME.

IT WAS MY FAULT. HE WASN'T READY FOR THE NEWS YET.

I SHOULD HAVE REALIZED THAT.

BUT YOU MUSTN'T FEEL GUILTY ABOUT YOUR WEDDING, MR. JAMESON. YOU HAVE YOUR OWN LIFE TO LEAD.

I KNOW, BUT I CAN'T BEAR TO SEE HIM THAT WAY.

I'LL BE BACK. I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING. I HAVE TO.

IN THE MEANTIME, WE'LL LOOK AFTER HIM. DON'T WORRY.

WORRY? JONAH WOULD HAVE A CONNIPTION FIT IF HE KNEW WHAT WAS IN STORE.

HE CAME TO VISIT HIS SON, DID HE? HOW TOUCHING.

IF HE SOUNDED SENTIMENTAL, DON'T LET IT FOOL YOU. IN A NEARBY CELL, ONE OF THE MOST DANGEROUS MEN IN THE WORLD WAS SCHEMING AND PLOTTING...

JAMESON'S SON PLAYS WITH PUZZLES WHILE MAC GARGAN WEARS A SOUPED-UP STRAIT JACKET.

BUT THAT'LL SOON CHANGE. OH YES, HOW IT WILL CHANGE.

I WASN'T THERE AT THE TIME, SO I PIECED THIS TOGETHER FROM LATER REPORTS. BUT TRUST ME.

IF NOT FOR JAMESON, I WOULDN'T BE HERE NOW.

IT'S ALL HIS FAULT, THAT'S WHY HE'S GOT TO PAY.

HE'S THE ONE WHO HIRED ME FOR THAT EXPERIMENT, TO MAKE ME MORE POWERFUL THAN SPIDER-MAN.

HE WANTED ME TO RID HIM OF THE WEB-SPINNER.

BUT I BECAME TOO POWERFUL, TOO DEADLY.

I BECAME --THE SCORPION!

AND NOW, IT'S ALMOST TIME FOR THE SCORPION TO STING AGAIN.

READY FOR YOUR SESSION, MAC?

I BROUGHT SOME CONSULTANTS TODAY.

BRING WHOEVER YOU WANT, DOC, LONG AS I AIN'T PAYIN' FOR IT.

NOW, YOU KNOW THE PAYMENTS ARE ALL TAKEN CARE OF.

SURE. THE MOST EXPENSIVE SANITARIUM AROUND, THE HIGHEST PRICED SHRINKS, ALL THE CARE I NEED.

SOMEONE'S SURE TAKIN' A BIG INTEREST IN MAC GARGAN.

THERE'RE PEOPLE IN HIGH PLACES CONCERNED ABOUT YOU, MAC. YOU SHOULD APPRECIATE IT.

NOW LET'S GET ON WITH THE THERAPY.

THERAPY! THERE WAS AS MUCH CHANCE OF THAT HELPING THE SCORPION AS THERE WAS OF MILKSHAKES CURING DRACULA.

SHERWOOD NURSING HOME

BUT THEY KEPT TRYING, ANYWAY. THEN, LATER THAT NIGHT...

IT'S ALMOST TIME. I HEAR HIS FOOTSTEPS.

NOW, IN RETROSPECT, IT'S ALL SO PAINFULLY CLEAR HOW IT MUST HAVE HAPPENED...

HI, MR. GARGAN. I BROUGHT YOU SOME COFFEE 'N SMOKES, AND A PAPER.

THAT'S NICE OF YOU, FRANK.

HEY, YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S NICE, LETTIN' ME VISIT YOU LIKE THIS. IT'S MADE ME A REAL BIG SHOT WITH MY FRIENDS.

THEY'RE ALWAYS ASKIN' ME ABOUT THE FAMOUS SCORPION.

AND WHAT DO YOU TELL THEM?

Y'KNOW, I TELL 'EM WHAT A GREAT GUY YOU ARE, AND HOW YOU LET ME COME VISIT YOU, AND THE WAY YOU TELL ME ALL THE FAR-OUT THINGS YOU'VE DONE.

AND HOW I'M THE ONLY ONE WHO'S ALLOWED TO COME 'N READ YOU THE PAPER.

AND WHAT HAVE YOU GOT TONIGHT?

HERE'S SOMETHING INTERESTING. JONAH JAMESON, THE BUGLE'S PUBLISHER, IS GETTING HITCHED.

I'VE SEEN HIM BEFORE. IN FACT, HE WAS HERE EARLIER. BOY, IN THIS JOB YOU MEET EVERY-ONE.

SHUDDUP! I HEARD ENOUGH. THIS IS WHAT I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR.

MR. GARGAN, YOU NEVER TALKED TO ME LIKE THAT BEFORE. WHAT DO YOU MEAN, IT'S WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR?

HOLD IT. WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

YOU'LL SOON FIND OUT.

I HATE TO DO THIS, SIR, BUT I GOT MY ORDERS.

GOTTA SHOOT A TRANQUILIZER DART AT YOU IF YOU GET OUTTA HAND.

GET OUT OF HAND?!! YOU SIMPERING FOOL--

YOU DON'T BEGIN TO SUSPECT THE RAW *POWER* YOU'RE FACING.

YOU SHOULDN'TA DONE THAT, MR. GARGAN. I- I THOUGHT WE WERE FRIENDS.

FRIENDS?

THE SCORPION HAS NO FRIENDS.

YOU REALLY THOUGHT THAT USELESS TOY WOULD STOP *ME*?!!

SO YOU BEEN TELLING EVERYBODY WHAT A GREAT GUY I AM, HUH? SO KNOWIN' A CELEBRITY MAKES YOU A BIG SHOT, HUH?

WELL, I'M GONNA GIVE YA SOMETHIN' TO REAL-LY TALK ABOUT.

HERE, CREEPO-- HOW'S THIS FOR STARTERS?

YOU-- RIPPED OFF THE PADDED STEEL DOOR-- BARE-HANDED!

NOW GET UP. YOU'RE GONNA DO SOMETHIN' FOR ME.

MY COSTUME. SHOW ME WHERE IT IS. NOW.

SURE, MR. GARGAN. SURE.

BUT IT WON'T DO YOU NO GOOD.

IT'S LOCKED IN THERE, BEHIND TWO FEET OF SOLID STEEL.

GOOD. I'M GLAD.

YOU'RE GLAD?

YEAH. IT'S NICE TO KNOW THEY TOOK GOOD CARE OF IT.

FROM THE LOOK OF THE PLACE LATER, I FIGURE GARGAN TOSSED THOSE CABINETS AROUND LIKE COMICBOOKS...

...TILL HE FOUND WHAT HE WAS LOOKING FOR.

HE-- HE'S PUTTING IT ON.

NOW'S MY CHANCE. I GOTTA GET AWAY.

I'LL MAKE IT. HE WOULDN'T HURT ME. WE WERE FRIENDS, HIM AND ME-- FRIENDS.

HE NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT HIM. ALL IT TOOK WAS ONE ELECTROMAGNETIC BLAST FROM GARGAN'S TAIL.

LIKE HE SAID, THE SCORPION HAS NO FRIENDS.

IF ONLY I HAD KNOWN. MAYBE I COULD HAVE DONE SOMETHING SOONER-- MAYBE I COULD HAVE PREVENTED SOME OF THE GRIEF. BUT I NEVER EVEN SUSPECTED WHAT WAS HAPPENING AT THAT LONELY SANITARIUM.

ALL THIS TIME, I WAITED--WAITED FOR THE RIGHT MINUTE. AND NOW IT'S HERE!

NOW I KNOW JUST WHAT I'VE GOTTA DO--

AND I'VE GOT THE POWER TO DO IT.

YOU PROBABLY GUESSED THAT JOHN JAMESON WAS THE SCORPION'S NEXT TARGET.

AND HE DIDN'T LET A LITTLE THING LIKE A DOOR STOP HIM.

SURPRISED, JAMESON?

THE EX-ASTRONAUT TRIED TO RESIST, BUT THERE WAS NO WAY. THE SCORPION COULDN'T BE STOPPED.

YOU'RE LUCKY. I MAY NOT KILL YOU --YET.

WITHIN SECONDS, THE HELPLESS VICTIM WAS BOUND, AS GARGAN HAD BEEN EARLIER.

YOU CAN'T DO IT. YOU'LL NEVER MAKE IT OVER THE WALL.

I WON'T, HUH?

I GUESS YOU NEVER HEARD--

--OF THE SCORPION'S CATAPULTING TAIL.

AND THEN THEY WERE GONE.

YEP, JUDGING BY THE EVIDENCE, THAT'S PROBABLY HOW IT WAS.

BUT YOU CAN BE SURE THIS PART HAPPENED JUST LIKE I'M TELLING IT. I MEAN, HEY, I WAS THERE.

DAILY BUGLE CITY ROOM

WHY'S THE PLACE SO DARK? I DON'T HEAR ANYONE-- DON'T SEE ANYTHING.

WHAT IN BLUE BLAZES IS GOIN' ON AROUND HERE?

SURPRISE, MR. JAMESON.

CONGRATULATIONS, JJ.

LET'S HEAR IT FOR THE BRIDEGROOM.

ALL OUR BEST WISHES, MR. JAMESON.

CONGRATS, BOSS.

HOPE YOU DON'T MIND, JONAH. THE STAFF WANTED TO WISH YOU LUCK IN THEIR OWN WAY. RIGHT, GANG?

YOU KNOW IT, MAN.

MIND? YOU KIDDIN', ROBBIE?

I LOVE PARTIES-- PROVIDED THEY DON'T LAST TOO LONG.

SURE. HE MAY HAVE TO PAY OVERTIME.

BETTER GET YOUR TUX OUT OF MOTH-BALLS.

THIS'LL BE THE FIRST BASH JAMESON'S THROWN IN YEARS. HOPE HE HASN'T FORGOT-TEN HOW.

HEY, WHEN A GUY'S IN LOVE, HE GOES ALL OUT. EVEN JAMESON.

GLAD YOU GOT BACK IN TIME FOR THE WEDDING, NED. YOU'VE BEEN GONE QUITE A WHILE.

I WONDER WHAT THAT MYSTERIOUS ASSIGNMENT OF NED'S WAS ALL ABOUT?

I WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED THIS FOR THE WORLD.

IT SUDDENLY OCCURRED TO ME. I NEVER GOT AN INVITATION TO JAMESON'S WEDDING. IT LOOKED LIKE I WAS THE ONLY BUGLE REGULAR WHO WASN'T INVITED.

MAYBE IT WAS LOST IN THE MAIL, PETER.

SURE, SON. THAT MUST BE IT.

SURE.

MINUTES LATER, THE BLUSHING BRIDEGROOM HIMSELF AMBLED OVER...

ANYONE WITH DEADLINES IS WELCOME TO GET BACK TO WORK NOW.

I WON'T BE OFFENDED.

YOU'RE ALL HEART, MR. J.

THEN CAME THE BOMBSHELL...

PETER, MY BOY, I HOPE YOU DON'T THINK I'VE FORGOTTEN ABOUT YOU, IT WOULDN'T BE A WEDDING WITHOUT YOU.

IT WOULDN'T?

I INSIST THAT YOU COME, AND BRING YOUR CAMERA.

YOU-- WANT ME TO WORK?

SHAME ON YOU, WOULD I SUGGEST ANYTHING SO CRASS?

NO, I JUST WANT YOU TO MEET MY PERSONAL PHOTOGRAPHER. PERHAPS YOU'LL LEARN SOMETHING.

GOOD OL' JJ, THE ONLY MAN IN THE WORLD WHO CAN DEPRESS YOU EVEN WITH GOOD NEWS...

BUT THEN I NOTICED SOMETHING THAT SPELLED BAD NEWS...

WE CAN ALL STAND IMPROVEMENT, M'BOY. EVEN =HEH HEH= ME.

COPS. COMING THIS WAY. WHAT'S WRONG?

MR. JAMESON, I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU FOR A MINUTE.

HEARD ABOUT THE WEDDING, HUH? SURE, I'LL SPRING FOR A FEW INVITATIONS. NOTHING'S TOO GOOD FOR OUR BOYS IN BLUE.

IT'S NOT THAT, SIR. THE SCORPION'S ESCAPED, AND HE'S CAPTURED YOUR SON.

JOHN?!!

SUDDENLY, I KNEW MY LITTLE BREAK WAS OVER. THERE WAS DANGER AHEAD, BIG DANGER--

--ESPECIALLY SINCE THE SCORPION WAS MORE POWERFUL THAN SPIDEY.

IT DIDN'T TAKE ME LONG TO GET BACK IN HARNESS.

I SEARCHED THE CITY FROM ONE END TO THE OTHER.

THERE WAS NO TRACE OF THE SCORPION.

HE'S TAKEN COVER SOMEWHERE. I'LL HAVE TO WAIT HIM OUT.

MEANTIME, I'D BETTER CHECK ON JONAH.

BUT WHEN I REACHED JAMESON'S STREET...

COPS, GUARDING EVERY INCH OF THE PLACE.

WELL, THEY WON'T STOP ME.

I CAN GET PAST THEM.

IT WAS A VERY SCARY THOUGHT.

BECAUSE, IF THEY COULDN'T STOP ME...

HOW COULD THEY STOP THE SCORPION?

IT WASN'T HARD TO IMAGINE WHAT WAS TAKING PLACE IN JONAH'S APARTMENT...

DON'T WORRY, MARLA DEAR. NOTHING CAN HAPPEN -- NOT WITH ALL THESE POLICE AROUND.

BUT THE SCORPION'S A KILLER, HE'S SUPER STRONG -- AND HE HATES YOU SO.

I KNOW, BUT THERE'S NOTHING MORE WE CAN DO.

YOU COULD HIDE WHERE HE CAN'T FIND YOU.

HE'S SAFER HERE, MISS MADISON.

ALL OUR POLICE RESOURCES ARE AT YOUR DISPOSAL. IF YOU RUN AND HE FINDS YOU, YOU HAVEN'T A CHANCE.

A GNAT COULDN'T GET IN HERE UNSEEN.

HALF THE COPS IN THIS PRECINCT HAVE THIS PLACE STAKED OUT.

I CAN'T RUN, MARLA. THERE'S MY SON JOHN TO THINK ABOUT.

MAYBE -- I CAN BARGAIN FOR HIS FREEDOM.

ANYWAY, THIS IS NO PLACE FOR YOU, DARLING. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, CAPTAIN?

YES. IT WOULD BE BETTER FOR YOU TO LEAVE, MISS MADISON. WE'VE A LOT OF PREPARATIONS TO MAKE.

MY MEN WILL SEE YOU SAFELY HOME.

I -- STILL FEEL I SHOULDN'T LEAVE HIM.

THERE'S NOTHING MORE YOU CAN DO, MA'AM.

HE'LL FEEL BETTER KNOWING YOU'RE SAFE.

ARE YOU SURE SHE'LL BE ALL RIGHT?

OF COURSE SHE WILL...

...WE BOTH KNOW IT'S YOU THE SCORPION IS AFTER.

MEANWHILE, NONE OF US KNEW, TILL LATER, THAT THE SCORPION WAS DRAGGING HIS CAPTIVE THRU THE OOZE AND SLIME OF THE CITY'S SEWERS...

STILL THINK I CAN'T GET AWAY WITH IT, MISTER?

THERE'S NOTHING MAC GARGAN CAN'T DO. NOTHING.

ONCE I'M IN MY SCORPION SUIT, I'M THE STRONGEST THERE IS. THE DEADLIEST THERE IS.

NO ONE CAN STOP ME. NOTHING CAN STAND IN MY WAY.

YOU'RE A MADMAN.

LOOK! YOU'RE THE ONE IN THE STRAITJACKET NOW.

I'M THE ONE WHO'S GOT IT ALL FIGURED OUT! I'M THE ONE WITH A PLAN!

A PLAN OF REVENGE.

I OWE SOMEONE A REAL BIG DEBT! AND THE SCORPION ALWAYS PAYS PEOPLE BACK --IN SPADES.

Y'KNOW WHO I MEAN, DON'T-CHA?

YOUR FATHER!

WAIT! YOU CAN'T--!

SAVE YER BREATH, SONNY! YOU'LL NEED IT WHEN I GET BACK!

ONE THING YOU HADDA SAY FOR THE GUY; HE WASN'T A TIME-WASTER.

THIS IS THE BUILDING! ALL I GOTTA DO IS REACH THE RIGHT FLOOR.

THE ELEVATOR'S NOT HERE.

BUT THAT WON'T STOP THE SCORPION.

I'VE WAITED TOO LONG TO LET ANYTHING SLOW ME DOWN NOW.

MEANWHILE, CAPT. DEWOLFF HAD NO MORE IDEA THAN I DID WHERE THE SCORPION WAS...

EVERYTHING'S QUIET AT THE MADISON APARTMENT? GOOD. NO, THERE'S BEEN NO TROUBLE HERE.

MARLA IS ALL RIGHT? THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS.

TO YOU, MAYBE. WE HAVE SOME OTHER CONCERNS.

BUT, NO SOONER DID THE LADY LAWPERSON HANG UP THE PHONE...

34

THIS IS IT. THE FLOOR I WANT.

THE SCORPION! HOW--?

NEVER MIND HOW. GRAB YOUR HARDWARE. WE GOTTA STOP 'IM.

HALT, OR WE'LL SHOOT.

YOU GOTTA BE KIDDING.

YEP. THAT'S WHEN IT ALL HIT THE FAN--

--AT MARLA MADISON'S APARTMENT!

GUNFIRE! IN THE HALLWAY.

MUST BE THE SCORPION!

JOHNSON! GET THE LASER-BLASTER!

STEP ASIDE, MISS MADISON. THIS'LL STOP HIM.

HOW CAN YOU BE SURE?

GOOD QUESTION, CONSIDERING WHAT WAS HAPPENING OUTSIDE THE DOOR...

I'VE WASTED ENOUGH TIME HERE.

THE SCORPION HAS MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO.

JOHNSON DID, TOO. LIKE AIMING HIS BLASTER WHEN SCORPIE SMASHED DOWN THE DOOR...

IT'S HIM!

HOLD IT RIGHT THERE.

HE NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT HIM.

I GUESS IT'S ONLY FAIR TO TELL YOU WHAT I WAS DOING ALL THIS TIME. I WAS WEB-SWINGING MY WAY ACROSS TOWN AT BREAKNECK SPEED.

KNOWING THAT MOST OF THE POLICE FIRE-POWER WAS GUARDING JOLLY JONAH, I FIGURED MARLA MADISON WOULD BE VULNERABLE.

SO I PLAYED A HUNCH.

AND WADDAYA KNOW, MY HUNCH PAID OFF.

BACK OFF, SCORPIE. THE LADY'S GOT A HEADACHE.

SPIDER-MA-- ÷UMMPHH÷

YOU FOOL! YOU SAVED ME THE TROUBLE OF HUNTING YOU DOWN!

YEAH, SCORPIE'S LITTLE HELPER, THAT'S ME.

YOU HAVEN'T GOT A CHANCE AGAINST MY POWER.

÷URRKK÷

HEY, BIG MOUTH, IF I ONLY BATTLED SURE THINGS--

I'D SPEND MY LIFE TANGLING WITH SNOOPY OR THE MUPPETS,

THOUGH THEY *ARE* A LOT MORE LAUGHS.

DON'T LET ONE LUCKY BLOW GO TO YOUR HEAD.

YOU CAN'T DODGE MY BLASTS FOREVER.

WHO'S DODGING? YOU'RE SO KLUTZY, THE SAFEST PLACE IS WHERE YOU'RE AIMING.

ZZSP!

NOW YOU DID IT, SCORPIE. YOU HIT THE FUSE BOX AND KIBOSHED THE LIGHTS.

THERE'S NOTHING WORSE THAN A CLUMSY BAD GUY.

I FIGURED I COULD AFFORD TO CROW...

...MY SPIDER-SENSE WOULD GIVE ME AN EDGE IN THE DARK.

BZZAAT

I FIGURED WRONG.

THE SCORPION COULD USE HIS TAIL BLAST TO LIGHT THE PLACE UP WHENEVER HE WANTED TO.

SO I HADDA MOVE FAST, BEFORE HIS NEXT SHOT.

THOK!

AND THAT'S JUST WHAT I DID.

BUT IT WASN'T EASY.

BWOK!

ZZZZTT

EACH TIME I HIT HIM, IT HURT MY FIST MORE THAN HIS FACE.

CLOP!

HE WAS JUST TOO MUCH STRONGER THAN ME.

AND DON'T THINK HE DIDN'T KNOW IT.

SOONER OR LATER YOU'LL WEAR YOURSELF OUT.

SOONER OR LATER MY BLAST WILL GET YOU.

YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR THE SCORPION.

HE HAD HIS OWN UNIQUE WAY OF PUNCTUATING HIS COMMENTS.

OKAY, OKAY. YOU MADE YOUR POINT.

THE ONLY TIME I GOT A BREATHER WAS WHEN HIS TAIL STOPPED FOR A FEW SECONDS, AND THE LIGHTS WENT OUT.

THAT'S WHEN MY SPIDEY SENSE GAVE ME THE AD-VANTAGE.

BYOINK!

SOME ADVANTAGE! EVEN WHEN I NAILED 'IM HE DIDN'T FEEL IT.

BUT I HAD MORE THAN MYSELF TO WORRY ABOUT. MARLA MADISON SEEMED ROOTED TO THE SPOT.

SPIDER-MAN-- LOOK OUT.

LADY, I APPRECIATE THE ADVICE, BUT TAKE OFF WHILE YOU CAN.

THIS IS NO PLACE FOR A CHEERING SECTION.

I SHOULDN'T HAVE CALLED TO HER. IN THAT SPLIT-SECOND MY CONCENTRATION WAVERED...

BOK!

AND THAT WAS ALL THE OPENING THE SCORPION NEEDED.

SPIDER STRENGTH OR NOT, I REALLY FELT THAT ONE.

AND THEN HE CLOSED IN FOR THE KILL.

LOOK, I DON'T WANNA MONOPOLIZE EVERY SCENE. LET ME TELL YOU WHAT WAS HAPPENING ELSEWHERE WHILE YOURS TRULY WAS TAKING HIS LUMPS...

I CAN'T JUST HANG HERE HELPLESSLY.

DAD NEEDS ME-- I KNOW IT!

IF I CAN JUST GET OUT OF THIS JACKET...

THERE MUST BE A WAY. THERE MUST.

WAIT A SECOND!

IF I CAN USE MY FEET-- PUSH MYSELF BACK UP THE WALL--HIGHER, A LITTLE HIGHER...

BUT SON JOHN WASN'T THE ONLY JAMESON DOING SOME HEAVY DUTY THINKING...

I DON'T LIKE IT. THERE'S NO ANSWER AT MARLA'S PLACE.

IMPOSSIBLE. SHE'S THERE WITH MY MEN.

I'LL BEEP THEM. MAYBE THE PHONE'S OUT OF ORDER.

AND MAYBE NOT. WHY ARE WE STANDING HERE?

BUT THEY DIDN'T ANSWER THE BEEPER EITHER.

THERE MUST MUST BE AN EXPLANATION. I'M SURE EVERYTHING IS PERFECTLY ALL RIGHT.

YEAH, I'LL BET YOU BELIEVE IN TOOTH FAIRIES, TOO.

SEND A TEAM OF PATROL CARS TO CHECK. QUICK.

THIS IS CRAZY. MARLA COULD BE IN DANGER, AND I'M HANGING AROUND HERE LIKE SOME KIND OF GUTLESS WIMP.

OR MAYBE IT'S NOT SO CRAZY.

MAYBE I AM A GUTLESS WIMP.

THE POLICE HAVE THEIR JOB TO DO, AND THEY'RE DOING IT THE BEST THEY CAN.

BUT I'VE SOMETHING TO DO, TOO.

AND IT'S HIGH TIME I DID IT.

ONE THING ABOUT OL' JJ--WHEN HE MAKES UP HIS MIND TO DO SOMETHING...

COPS IN THE HALL. CAN'T LET 'EM STOP ME.

INSIDE, QUICK! IT'S THE SCORPION! HE'S ATTACKING! HURRY!

THIS IS IT. LET'S GO.

I DON'T SEE 'IM.

MUST BE IN THE OTHER ROOM. EVERYTHING'S TOO QUIET. CAREFUL-- COULD BE AN AMBUSH.

JONAH WASN'T ABOUT TO LET GO OF A GOOD THING. ONCE OUTSIDE, HE DID IT AGAIN...

THE SCORPION! HE'S UPSTAIRS! CAME IN THRU THE WINDOW!

HOW? WE'VE GOT MEN ON THE ROOF.

HE GOT PAST THEM. HURRY, THEY NEED YOU. EVERY SECOND COUNTS.

WHAT'RE WE WAITING FOR? LET'S MOVE IN.

AGNELLI, YOU STAY AND LOOK AFTER MR. JAMESON.

RIGHT, BERNIE. DON'T WORRY, I WON'T LET 'IM OUT OF MY SIGHT.

TAXI

JUST STAY COOL, MR. J, YOU'LL BE AL--

MR. J? WHERE ARE YOU? WHAT HAPPENED?

HOLY COW! THE GUY MUST BE A GHOST!

RIGHT ABOUT THEN, I'D HAVE WISHED **SCORPY** WAS A GHOST--

MAYBE HIS TAIL WOULDN'T HAVE STUNG SO BAD.

DUNNO WHAT'S KEEPIN' YOU GOING, WALL-CRAWLER--

--BUT IT AIN'T GONNA KEEP YOU MUCH LONGER.

NO!

IT FINALLY DAWNED ON MARLA THAT HER APARTMENT WASN'T THE HEALTHIEST PLACE TO BE.

I'VE GOT TO REACH THE DOOR.

BUT SHE BUMPED INTO A TABLE IN THE DARK...

KTHAK!

HEARING THE NOISE, THE SCORPION THOUGHT IT WAS ME...

CRASH

TRYIN' TO MAKE A GETAWAY, HUH?

...AND HE ACTED ACCORDINGLY.

I'M NOT DONE WITH YOU YET.

MY ARM!

SHE WAS LUCKY. HE JUST GRAZED HER.

BUT THE NEXT TIME COULD BE THE LAST.

IT DIDN'T TAKE A GENIUS TO KNOW WHAT MY NEXT STEP HAD TO BE...

I'VE GOT TO GET HER OUT OF HERE-- SOMEHOW.

BUT THE CREEP WITH THE TAIL HAS OTHER IDEAS.

A SPLIT-SECOND LATER, IN THE DARK AGAIN, I HAD MY CHANCE.

JUST TIME TO GRAB HER AND SKEEDADDLE.

SPIDEY-SPEED, DON'T FAIL ME NOW!

NATURALLY, HE SPOTTED US AS WE DUCKED OUT THE WINDOW.

COME BACK, YA CHICKEN-LIVERED YELLABELLY.

HEY, IT'S HARD TO RESIST SUCH A WARM INVITATION.

BUT I'LL FORCE MYSELF.

THERE'S NO PLACE YA CAN GO WHERE I CAN'T FOLLOW.

BOY, YOU SURE TAKE TAKE THE FUN OUTTA WEB-SWINGING.

IF ONLY I FELT AS COOL AS I TRIED TO SOUND.

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO GET DIZZY WHEN YOU'RE UP TOO HIGH, HERE'S WHAT WAS HAPPENING DOWN BELOW...

I DID IT! I EDGED MYSELF OFF THE HOOK.

BUT I'M STILL HELPLESS WITH THIS STRAIT-JACKET ON.

GOT TO GET IT OFF-- SOMEHOW.

OVER THERE-- THAT JAGGED CONCRETE. THAT'S THE ANSWER.

YOU HAD TO HAND IT TO THE GUY...

HE SCRAPED OFF PAINFUL SLIVERS OF SKIN ALONG WITH THE JACKET...

MUST KEEP RUBBING-- --NO MATTER --HOW IT HURTS.

BUT HE DIDN'T LET IT STOP HIM.

FINALLY, HE DID IT. AND THEN...

THOSE SMASHED DOORS. THE SCORPION MUST HAVE CRAWLED UP THE SHAFT.

I'LL HAVE TO USE THE STAIRS.

I JUST PRAY-- IT'S NOT TOO LATE.

I WASN'T EXACTLY SURE WHERE JOHN JAMESON WENT AFTER THAT.

BUT I HAD MY OWN PROBLEMS.

YOU WON'T ESCAPE ME.

HEY, NO HARM TRYING.

THIS'LL STOP YA.

AND THEN, TERROR STRUCK.

NO, THE TERROR WASN'T MY FEAR OF BEING HIT. IT WAS FAR WORSE...

IF I DODGE IT, IT'LL FALL TO THE CROWDED STREET BELOW.

PEOPLE WILL DIE!

BUT I CAN'T LET IT HIT US.

I HAD ONLY A MICRO-SECOND IN WHICH TO ACT.

TO THIS DAY, I DON'T KNOW IF I THOUGHT QUICKLY OR JUST MOVED BY REFLEX ACTION...

BUT I MANAGED TO KICK THE SLAB INTO LITTLE PIECES...

...WHICH FELL HARMLESSLY TO THE STREET BELOW.

LOOK!

AND WOULDN'T YOU KNOW WHO'D BE DOWN THERE IN A TAXI...

IT'S THE WEB-SLINGER --CARRYING MARLA!

THE SCORPION MUST BE AFTER THEM! STEP ON IT! DON'T LET 'EM GET AWAY!

ME GIT MIXED-UP WITH TWO BATTLIN' SUPER-GOONS? NO WAY, MAC.

I'LL GIVE YOU A HUNDRED BUCKS, CASH!

FASTEN YER SEAT-BELT!

WHEN I HEARD ABOUT IT LATER, I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT. JJ SHELLING OUT HARD CASH JUST 'CAUSE THE LADY HE LOVED WAS IN DANGER!

NEXT THING YOU KNOW, HE'D START TIPPING CABBIES AND WAITERS.

MARLA! SHE'S WAKING UP!

AT LEAST I WON'T HAVE TO FIGHT THE SCORPION WITH MY ARMS FULL.

SPIDER-MAN! WHAT HAPPENED? HOW DID WE--?

NO TIME FOR AN INSTANT REPLAY, LADY.

JUST GET DOWN THESE STAIRS, FAST-- DON'T STOP FOR ANY-THING.

SURE, I COULD HAVE SPLIT, TOO. BUT I WAS THROUGH RUNNING.

HAH! I CAUGHT YA.

YOU'VE GOT THAT BACK-WARDS, TURKEY.

THIS TIME I'M NOT WORRIED ABOUT ANYONE ELSE GETTING HURT!

IT'S JUST THE TWO OF US-- AND THAT'S ONE TOO MANY FOR ME!

ZAKK!

SO HERE'S WHERE I WHITTLE DOWN THE NUMBERS.

BUT IF I EX-PECTED A FAIR FIGHT FROM SCORPY, I NEEDED A LOBOTOMY.

I CAN ALWAYS BEAT YOU, Y'KNOW WHY?

A SECOND LATER, HE SHOWED ME...

YOU CAN'T STAND BY AND SEE INNOCENT PEOPLE GET HURT.

ME, I COULDN'T CARE LESS.

HE WAS RIGHT. HE KNEW I'D BREAK OFF THE FIGHT TO SAVE THE PEOPLE BELOW AGAIN.

THE STREET'S AS CROWDED AS EVER, ONLY ONE WAY TO STOP THAT COR-NICE FROM FALL-ING...

THWIPP!

CAN'T WORRY ABOUT THE SCORPION NOW--AND HE KNOWS IT.

SO THERE I WAS, STRAINING MY HEROIC LITTLE HEART OUT, WHILE THAT TAIL-WAVING TROGLODYTE GLOATED.

I'LL GET HER ON THE STREET BELOW, AND NO WAY YOU CAN HELP 'ER.

YOU CAN'T LET GO TILL YOU SHORE THAT UP.

I COULD ONLY WATCH AS HE LEAPED DOWN TOWARDS MARLA...

I SAW WHAT WAS HAPPENING, BUT THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO.

FINALLY, JUST AS I WEBBED THE WALL BACK IN PLACE, JAMESON'S TAXI REACHED THE SCENE...

MARLA! IT'S ME, JONAH! I'M HERE! I'LL SAVE YOU!

FUEL

BUT THE LADY NEEDED A LOT OF SAVING.

IT'S OVER. THERE'S NO PLACE YOU CAN RUN.

WHAT-- ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

NOTHING! HE'LL DO NOTHING. I'M HERE NOW. IT'S ME HE WANTS, NOT YOU.

JAMESON!

LET HER GO. SHE'S DONE NOTHING. YOU MUSTN'T HURT HER-- YOU CAN'T!

I CAN DO ANYTHING. I'M THE SCORPION. BUT YOU --YOU'RE THE ONE WHO TURNED ME INTO A FREAK.

YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S GONNA PAY FIRST.

PAY? I'VE BEEN PAYING FOR YEARS. WHO DO YOU THINK PAID FOR YOUR DOCTORS, FOR THE SANITARIUM?

I'VE EVEN SET UP A FUND TO REPAY YOUR VICTIMS.

SO, IT WAS YOU!

I KNOW I WAS RESPONSIBLE YEARS AGO. THAT'S WHY I'LL PAY YOU WHATEVER IT TAKES--

YOU FOOL! DO YOU THINK MONEY ALONE CAN GET YOU OFF THE HOOK?

YOU MADE ME A FREAK! WHAT'S THE PRICE FOR THAT, JAMESON?!!

MONEY MEANS NOTHING. WITH MY STRENGTH, MY POWER, I CAN TAKE WHAT I NEED. THE ONLY PAYMENT I WANT FROM YOU IS--

YOUR LIFE!

DAD!

AND THE LIFE OF ANYONE YOU CARE ABOUT-- STARTING WITH HER.

RUN, JONAH! LEAVE ME, DARLING! YOU CAN STILL GET AWAY!

NO, MARLA-- IT'S ME HE WANTS. HE'LL LET YOU GO NOW THAT HE HAS ME--ISN'T THAT RIGHT, GARGAN?

NO! I WON'T LEAVE YOU, JONAH!

MARLA--!

THEY'D EACH GIVE THEIR LIFE-- FOR THE OTHER.

I-- NEVER REALIZED--

--THEIR LOVE IS SO STRONG.

THEY MUSTN'T DIE! THEY CAN'T! I WON'T LET THEM!

WELL, IF IT AIN'T THE PRODIGAL SON!

JOHN!

PERFECT! I GOT YA ALL. IT'S JUST WHAT I WANTED.

I'LL BE A NICE GUY, JAMESON. I'LL GIVE YA A CHOICE.

ONE OF THEM CAN LIVE! THE OTHER'S GOT TO DIE!

IT'S UP TO YOU! WHO LIVES? WHO DIES?

THE LADY?

OR YER CREEPY SON?

I AIN'T GOT ALL DAY.

WHICH--

ONE--

DIES?

ME! TAKE ME, I'M THE ONE YOU WANT.

MARLA AND MY SON HAVE DONE NOTHING TO YOU-- NOTHING.

LET THEM GO--DON'T HURT THEM. JUST TAKE ME.

THANKS, JAMESON. I NEEDED THAT. I BEEN WAITIN' YEARS FOR THIS MINUTE.

BUT YER DUMBER THAN YA LOOK IF YOU THINK I'D LET ANYONE WALK OUTTA HERE ALIVE.

MAYBE I'LL SAVE YOU FER LAST.

NO!

GO ON, BEG. IT'S MUSIC T'MY EARS.

I'M THE SCORPION! I GOT THE POWER OF LIFE AN' DEATH.

AND THIS IS WHERE I'M GONNA USE IT!

IF THERE'S ONE THING I HATE, IT'S A HAMMY BAD GUY!

THWIPP!

THE ONLY REVENGE YOU'LL GET IS TALKING YOUR VICTIMS TO DEATH!

MY EYES! CAN'T SEE!

THAT'S THE IDEA, DUMMY.

QUICK! NOW'S OUR CHANCE.

SURPRISED, SCORPY? HEY, YOU DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD TAKE ME FOREVER TO SHORE UP ONE LITTLE HUNK OF WALL, DIDJA?

THAT'S IT. KEEP MOVING. DON'T STOP FOR ANYTHING.

WHY COULDN'T YOU HAVE TAKEN 'EM TO THE MIDDLE OF TIMES SQUARE INSTEAD OF A LONELY ALLEY?

US FRIENDLY NEIGHBOR-HOOD SPIDER-MEN LOVE AN AUDIENCE WHEN WE COME ON LIKE GANG-BUSTERS.

ACTUALLY, I'M NOT OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER THE GANGBUSTERS RADIO SHOW, BUT UNCLE BEN USED TO TALK ABOUT IT. JUST THOUGHT YOU'D LIKE TO KNOW.

THIS WAS ONE FIGHT I'LL NEVER FORGET. JUST BETWEEN US, I ENJOYED EVERY MINUTE OF IT.

IT'S JUST YOU 'N ME NOW, SCORPY. ISN'T THAT COZY?

IT AIN'T FAIR. I CAN'T SEE THRU YER CRUMMY WEBBING.

CRUMMY? HEY, MAN, DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT STUFF COSTS THESE DAYS?

--EVEN WITH MY PROFESSIONAL DISCOUNT.

AND *YOU'RE* TALKING ABOUT FAIR?!!

I KNEW THAT THE MORE I GOADED HIM, THE MORE HE'D LOSE CONTROL!

ONE THING YOU NEVER WANNA DO IS FIGHT A CALM, CLEAR-THINKING SCORPION.

HOLD STILL, PLAY-MATE. I'LL HELP YOU GET THE WEBBING OFF.

A FEW SOLID WHUMPS TO YOUR JAW OUGHTTA LOOSEN IT.

DON'T BOTHER, FUNNY MAN. I DID IT.

IT WAS ONLY STUCK ONTO MY MASK.

WOW! NOW I REMEM-BER WHY YOU WORE A MASK.

WHERE DO YOU BUY YOUR UGLY-PILLS?

KEEP TALKIN'. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO MUCH LONGER.

UH, UH! GOTTA BE FASTER'N THAT TO SWAT A SPIDER.

HEY, THIS IS A GREAT BEAT! WE COULD BE ON M/TV!

ZOK!

ZOK!

ZOK!

ZOK!

IT DON'T MAKE SENSE. I'M BIGGER THAN YOU, STRONGER THAN YOU. HOW D'YA KEEP GOIN'?

YOU LEFT OUT THE MOST IMPORTANT THING--YOU'RE SLOWER THAN ME.

MENTALLY, TOO, KNOT-HEAD!

ANYWAY, SO WHAT IF YOU'RE STRONGER? I'M NOT EXACTLY A 98-POUND WEAK-LING.

I KNEW I COULDN'T KEEP DODGING HIM FOREVER, SO I PUT EVERYTHING I HAD INTO THAT ONE WHUMP, FIGURING IT WOULD FINISH HIM.

DIDJA EVER HAVE A DAY WHEN NOTHING WENT RIGHT?

ARRGHHH

THAT SINKS IT! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO BEAT HIM.

THIS WAS THE ANSWER. KEEP HIM ON THE OFFENSIVE. LET HIM USE HIS OWN STRENGTH TO WEAR HIMSELF OUT.

AND PRAY HE DIDN'T CONNECT BEFORE IT WAS OVER.

MY HEAD! WH-WHAT HAPPENED? STAY BACK. I-I'LL GET YA YET.

HE'S WEAKENING. EVEN HIS TAIL IS SLOWER THAN BEFORE.

I HAVE TO MAKE MY PLAY NOW, BEFORE HE CAN GET HIS SECOND WIND.

I WUZ DUMB. I LET YA RUN RINGS AROUND ME--YA WORE ME OUT. BUT NOT ANYMORE.

NOW I'LL MAKE YA COME TO ME. AND WHEN YOU DO, I'LL--

YOU'RE DOIN' IT AGAIN, SCORPY--MAKIN' SPEECHES.

YOU SURE YOU'RE NOT A DEFROCKED POLITICIAN?

I NEVER LET HIM KNOW IT, BUT I WAS ALMOST AS TIRED AS HE WAS. I KNEW THIS WOULD BE MY LAST CHANCE. IT HAD TO BE GOOD.

WOK!

IT WAS.

SINCE WE HAD SHARED SO MANY INTIMATE MOMENTS TOGETHER, I FIGURED THE LEAST I COULD DO WAS LEAVE MY CALLING CARD.

I HATE TO FIGHT AND RUN, SKINHEAD, BUT YOU'VE TURNED INTO A REAL PARTY POOPER.

Courtesy of your Friendly Neighborhood Spider-Man

A FEW SECONDS LATER, THE LAW ARRIVED AND CARTED SCORPY AWAY. THEY DIDN'T SEE ME HIDING 'WAY UP ON THE CEILING. IT'S JUST AS WELL.

I'D PROBABLY HAVE BEEN STUCK WITH A BILL FOR THE BUSTED FURNITURE.

IT'S OVER, MARLA. WE'RE SAFE NOW.

JONAH, IF ANY-THING HAD HAPPENED TO YOU...

CONGRATULA-TIONS, MR. J. YOU'VE GOT ONE SPUNKY LADY.

CAPTAIN, WHAT ABOUT SPIDER-MAN?

WHAT ABOUT HIM? HE STOPPED A BANK ROBBERY, SAVED A FEW LIVES, AND DELIVERED THE SCORPION TO US.

AND HE'S NOT EVEN ON THE PAYROLL.

NOW THAT'S MY KIND'A CAPTAIN.

WHEN JONAH'S WEDDING DAY ROLLED AROUND, I WEB-SWUNG OVER TO RIB HIM A LITTLE. BUT, WHEN I REACHED HIS WINDOW, I GOT THE FEELING THIS WASN'T THE RIGHT TIME.

YOU SENT FOR ME, DAD?

YES, JOHN. I WANTED TO HAVE A TALK WITH YOU BEFORE THE CEREMONY.

SURE. WHAT-EVER YOU SAY.

NO, SON. IT'S WHATEVER ***YOU*** SAY. THINGS HAVEN'T ALWAYS BEEN PERFECT BETWEEN US. I-- WANT TO CHANGE THAT.

HEY, THERE'S NOTHING TO CHANGE.

Y'KNOW, YOU NEVER COULD TIE A BOWTIE.

ABOUT MY MARRIAGE TO MARLA-- I LOVE HER, JOHN.

I KNOW THAT NOW. AND I KNOW YOU'LL BOTH BE GOOD FOR EACH OTHER.

IT ISN'T AS THOUGH YOU MEAN ANY LESS TO ME, SON. YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT YOU.

I DO NOW. I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN ALL THE TIME.

YOU-- HAD PROBLEMS BEFORE.

BUT YOU'RE ON THE ROAD TO RECOVERY NOW. AND I JUST WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT I HOPE-- I WISH --THAT ONE DAY YOU'LL FIND SOMEONE LIKE MARLA--

SOMEONE WHO'LL MAKE YOU HAPPY-- AS HAPPY AS SHE MAKES ME.

I LOVE YOU, SON. DON'T EVER DOUBT IT. DON'T EVER FORGET IT.

I LOVE YOU, TOO, DAD. MAY-BE I NEVER REALIZED HOW MUCH --UNTIL NOW.

AND THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE I'VE GOT TO TELL YOU...

I'M PROUD OF YOU, DAD. TO ME YOU'RE THE BEST-- AND YOU ALWAYS WILL BE.

JOHN, MY SON...

JONAH, IT'S TIME. EVERYONE'S WAITING FOR THE GROOM.

I'M COMING, ROBBIE.

AND SO IS-- MY BEST MAN.

WELL, THERE'S REALLY NOT MUCH MORE TO SAY. IT MUST BE TRUE LOVE, 'CAUSE I NEVER THOUGHT OL' JJ WOULD FOOT THE BILL FOR SO MANY GUESTS. MARLA LOOKED TERRIFIC, AND JONAH DIDN'T LOOK ANY WORSE THAN USUAL. EVERYONE WHO WAS ANYONE WAS THERE, INCLUDING YOURS TRULY.

OH, ONE LAST THING. I REALLY SHOULDN'T TELL YOU THIS, BUT WHEN THE CEREMONY FINALLY STARTED, NOBODY HAD MORE TEARS TRICKLING DOWN HIS CHEEKS THAN YOUR OWN FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD SPIDER-MAN.

DEARLY BELOVED, WE ARE GATHERED HERE...

SEE? IF GROUCHY OLD MEN CAN FIND LOVE, THERE'S HOPE FOR US ALL!

FIN